Loss of lives of Indian Haj Pilgrims

440. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian Haj Pilgrims who lost their lives during the Haj this year due to building collapse and stampede; and

(b) the nature of financial and other assistance given, if any, by Government for the transportation of their bodies to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Total 65. In this building collapse three (3) people while in stampede 62 persons.

(b) Nil. The relatives of the deceased decided to arrange the burials in the Holy City of Makkah and not to send the bodies home.

Delegation to Philippines

441. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level delegation was led to Philippines, recently;

(b) if so, the details of the composition of the delegation; and

(c) the bilateral agreements signed during this visit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Hon'ble President visited the Philippines from 3rd to 6th February 2006. accompanied by Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, Minister for Rural Development, three Members of Parliament *viz.* Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Shri Vanlalzawma and Shri Sachin Pilot, as well as high ranking officials and scientists.

(c) the agreements signed during the visit were: (i) a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in Agriculture and related fields; (ii) an Agreement on cooperation in the field of Tourism; (iii) an Agreement on Defence Cooperation.